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POETRY: *A Magazine of Verse*

THE SERINGA

The seringa casts its petals across the slanting rays of the  
sun.

There are shadows in the grass where they lie;  
I gather them up in my hand,  
And their perfume distends my nostrils and closes my eyes.  
I crush their sweetness in my palm  
And scatter them back to the grass.  
But in the night a wind will come,  
And the petals whirl hither and thither,  
And the perfume be no more.

Oh, I will fashion your beauty into a measure,  
To fling it over the housetops  
And cast it into the meadows.  
Lo, in my heart  
The song of a bird that liveth not in memory,  
And in the shell of a rose  
A hundred years of Athens or of Rome.  
Though my song die with my breath,  
(Yes, though I am dust,  
Though Rome become as Babylon),  
It shall vibrate on a harp that ceaseth not,  
That gathereth all music into itself  
As the seas all streams.

Yet, for my joy, and for thy beauty's sake,  
Linger, sweet perfume, till the sun be set!

*John Alford.*